

Analogous Soviet Responses

The first authoritative threat to place US territory at risk in the event of US INF deployment to Europe was issued by Brezhnev one year ago. Brezhnev indicated that:

- The Soviet Union will take steps to place the "other side, including the United States and its territories" in an "analogous position" once NATO deployment begins.

Andropov in his speech of 21 December 1982, referred to the "grave consequences" of putting P-IIs in Europe. Minister of Defense Ustinov, on 10 March, also was vague in raising the prospect of countermeasures to NATO INF deployments.

Other recent comments from high officials, however, have been more specific.

- Senior Central Committee official Zagladin warned on 9 March that even if the United States deployed only "30 or 40" of the planned 108 Pershing II missiles, the Soviet reaction would be the same: to "deploy missiles equivalent to the Pershing II's, with an equally rapid flight time, in the vicinity of the United States."
- General Staff spokesman General Chervov on 7 March said that countermeasures by the Soviet Union and its allies would affect not only those European states where missiles are sited but U.S. territory as well, adding that the Soviet Union "has the capacity to do this."
- Soviet American specialist Arbatov in Pravda on 17 March warned that Moscow's counterdeployment to actual deployment by NATO would include Soviet missiles not only in Europe but also "close to US borders."

Despite their disappointment in the West German election, the Soviets apparently are still hopeful that political pressures and massive public demonstrations in Western Europe might disrupt or reduce NATO's INF deployments. Moscow's threats to put the US in an analogous position are intended at a minimum to heighten pressure on Washington for an interim proposal that the Soviets would then use to urge a delay in Western deployments in hopes that this would lead to a collapse of NATO's fragile INF consensus.

If the Soviets decide to act on their threats to place the United States in an analogous position, their options might include:

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